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GayCommunityNews

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**Activist Scholar
Nancy Shaw: Still Fighting
For Tenure At UC Santa Cruz**



**Hot & Heavy Dykes:
An Evening of
Good Clean Sleaze**

**Coors' Distributor Brews Dissent
In Gay And Lesbian
Community**

GayCommunityNews

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Boston Coors Distribution Draws Protests Coors 'Not Anti-Gay,' Says Distributor

By Kim Westheimer

BOSTON — United Liquors, the exclusive distributor of Coors beer in the greater Boston area, has recently attempted to place ads in Boston lesbian and gay papers. The ads state, "United Liquors Ltd. wants you to know that a contribution to AIDS research is made every time you purchase one of their products." To many, this appears to be an attempt to convince the lesbian and gay community to call off the Coors boycott.

Coors brewery has been the target of a nationwide boycott by unions, gay men, lesbians, and people of color since the mid-1970s. Organizers of the boycott claim that Coors is anti-union, racist, homophobic, and that it funds ultra-conservative groups such as the Heritage Foundation, a right-wing think-tank, founded by Joe Coors; the Moral Majority; and Nicaraguan contras.

It appears that this boycott has affected Coors sales. The *Denver Post* reported that Coors sales decreased by 3.9 percent between 1983 and 1984, despite expansion of marketing to nine additional states during that time. In an effort to increase sales, Coors has embarked on a hard-hitting campaign to convince the lesbian and gay community that it is not anti-gay, racist, or anti-union.

United Liquors has joined Coors in lobbying the Boston lesbian and gay community since they acquired a Coors contract in April. They met with City Councillor David Scondras and John

Meadows, a Coors public relations person. "We wanted to meet with David Scondras because we heard there were allegations that we were anti-everything coming out of his office," said Meadows. At that meeting, Meadows presented a file of material to prove that the boycott should be halted. This file included editorials from California gay papers, *The Sentinel*, and *The Advocate*, in support of Coors beer, and the transcript of a *60 Minutes* show which portrayed the Coors brewery as a good place to work.

Ray Tye, the chairperson of United Liquors, said that his company's recent ad was not an attempt to promote Coors beer to the lesbian and gay community. "I want corporations to know that I am giving money to the Deaconess [Hospital] for AIDS research," said Tye. "I feel strongly that money for AIDS research has to come out of the corporate world. The government is not going to come up with the money."

Some members of the Boston Boycott Coors Taskforce question Tye's motives. "It's in the best interest of his business in terms of money to get Coors business and the lesbian and gay business," said Pam Bemis of the taskforce. "I personally can't support a company distributing Coors beer and neither can a lot of people. He'll probably have to make a decision whether he wants our business or theirs [Coors']. Given the relationship with the lesbian and gay community in the past, it's unfortunate that they are the

company that has chosen to distribute Coors."

Tye appeared at a lesbian and gay networking breakfast at the Club Cafe on December 11, in an effort to maintain a good relationship with the lesbian and gay community. He gave a history of United Liquors' involvement with the lesbian and gay community beginning in 1964 when they started doing business with the Boston gay bar, Sporters. Tye said that his company sold beer at Boston's first lesbian and gay pride festival. He described himself as someone concerned with civil rights for everyone, and asked that people keep this history in mind when considering his statement that "Coors is not anti-union or anti-gay."

Newspapers approached by United Liquors to run their ad have reacted differently. *GCN* chose not to run the ad in support of the Coors boycott.

"Our position is that we don't believe in secondary boycotts," said Edward Hougen, publisher of the *Guide*. "We accept advertising from gay bars that have Coors. We'd be in tough shape if we refused to run ads from anyone who had anything to do with Coors. Most bars in Provincetown distribute Coors."

Jim Hoover, publisher of *Bay Windows*, said of his choice to run the ad, "I don't base the acceptance of advertising on my personal opinion. We have had crackpots," continued Hoover, "that advertise AIDS products

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What 60 Minutes Said

A *60 Minutes* television show, aired by CBS in the summer of 1982, portrayed Coors as a good place to work and has been used repeatedly by Coors to improve its image. According to a report by Rockne Porter of the Drake Law School paper, *The Gavel*, *60 Minutes* omitted much information about Coors. While Mike Wallace of *60 Minutes* stated that Coors workers voted out the AFL-CIO union by a 2-1 margin, he did not let viewers know that striking workers were not allowed to vote in that decertification election. Furthermore, those who did vote consisted primarily of scabs, people who had been hired to work at Coors during the year-and-a-half long strike.

60 Minutes' bias was also clear, according to Rockne, in a sequence described as depicting employees on their lunch hour. This segment included a Latino supervisor and a female construction supervisor praising the brewery. According to Rockne, this gathering was limited to supervisors, managers, and Joe and Bill Coors.

In his report, Rockne pointed out a glaring journalistic conflict of interest for *60 Minutes*. When the Coors show was aired, commercial breaks included Coors advertisements.

— Kim Westheimer

Boycotters Target 'Legal'

By Kim Westheimer

BOSTON — The Boston Boycott Coors Taskforce is committed to convincing local bars and restaurants to stop selling Coors beer as part of a strategy to pressure the beer's manufacturers to change practices seen as oppressive. The taskforce's latest target is Legal Sea Foods, an extremely popular Boston restaurant. The restaurant was the site of an informational picket organized by the taskforce on December 1.

John Campbell, a member of the taskforce, said, "Legal Sea Foods was chosen for the picket because they had acceded to our initial request [that they stop selling Coors] and then reneged when Legal Sea Foods attorneys approached the owner with evidence that there was not much wrong with Coors."

Boycott organizers were pleased with the picket, which was attended by approximately 100 people — a coalition including lesbians, gay men, and union members. Four taskforce members met with Roger Berkowitz, the owner of Legal Sea Foods, during the picket and found him very willing to talk. They were not able to change his mind about Coors.

"Some of their allegations could be substantiated, some could not," said Berkowitz. "We did not feel we should be used as a judge. There were some plus things Coors was doing. They happen to be a large contributor to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People."

Members of the Boycott Coors Taskforce followed up the picket

by meeting with Berkowitz again on December 9. They brought with them signed affidavits by former Coors employees who had been forced to take lie-detector tests as a condition for employment. "We focused on human dignity issues," said taskforce member Pam Bemis. "We talked about anti-Semitism and the Heritage Foundation, founded by Joseph Coors, which employed Roger Pierson. Pierson is an anti-Semite who edited a paper with a former SS officer."

Berkowitz remained unconvinced. "Our belief is that Joseph Coors is not a saint," said Berkowitz. "We still had difficulty seeing concrete evidence against Coors."

Organizers of the Coors boycott insist that their evidence shows the Coors boycott is legitimate. "Jeff Coors, Pete Coors, Holly Coors as well as Joe Coors donate to the Committee for a Survival of a Free Congress," said Howard Wallace, a boycott organizer in San Francisco. "That organization trains activists for the Moral Majority."

Frequently cited as an indication of Coors racism is a statement by William Coors, reported in *The Rocky Mountain News* of Denver. Speaking to Third World business owners, Coors is quoted as saying, "One of the best things they [slave traders] did for you is to drag your ancestors over here in chains.... It's not that the dedication among the blacks is less; in fact, it's greater. They lack the intellectual capacity to succeed, and it's taking them down the tubes."

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'Save your daughter' from lesbianism

Lesbian Students' Parents Getting Anonymous Calls

By Laurie Sherman

NORTON, MA — Lesbian students at Wheaton College have been experiencing an unusual form of harassment: unidentified women telephone callers inform parents of the students' lesbianism. Revealing details of the students' personal lives, the callers urge parents to "save" their daughters.

In addition to the phone calls, many lesbians have found large L's scribbled on their doors and next to their names on dorm lists. Students are working with faculty members and administrators at this 1200-student women's college in the small town of Norton, Mass. in attempts to halt the harassment, through education and public denunciation of homophobic behavior.

The Phone Calls

GCN interviewed five lesbian students whose parents or friends' parents have received calls. Requesting anonymity, the students revealed that up to 18 calls are known to have occurred, with a concentration of up to 14 in the past two years, and at least four calls between 1977 and 1983. Although most parents reacted negatively and refused to answer all of their daughters' questions, the information obtained by the students reveals similarities between calls.

The families of four of the interviewed women received at least one call each, ranging from June 1983 to October 1985. Every caller warned the parents that their daughter was associating with "the wrong crowd," eventually referring directly to lesbians, and gave details about the daughter's lover and friends, including dates, times and places the friends and lovers were together, on- and off-campus. According to the students, all of the callers' details were accurate.

One lesbian, "Susan," noted that her harassment stands out somewhat from the others. She received two phone calls, March of 1984 and 1985; during the second call the harasser broke down in tears, insisting to the parent that the caller herself had once been a lesbian and was now "saved," and urging "it's not too late" for the mother to "save" Susan.

In every call except one, according to the information the parents supplied their daughters, the caller sounded like a young woman. Susan's mother said the second caller sounded older. Since the parents appear to agree with and wish to protect the callers, the students are uncertain as to the accuracy of their parents' informa-

tion.

Parental Reaction

Of the four women interviewed whose parents had received calls, only one had come out to her parents before the harassment. The others faced serious repercussions. According to "Kim," her mother knew Kim was a lesbian before the call in June of 1983 and hung up on the caller. "Mary's" father, on the other hand, asked her to come home for a weekend in October of this year, without an explanation. Sending her mother and brother out of the house, he told her about the call and beat her "... to get me to tell him the truth," as she explained to *GCN*. Mary finally convinced her father she is not a lesbian and the beating halted.

According to Susan, after receiving a call in March of 1984, her devoutly Catholic parents followed the telephoner's advice of seeking help, speaking with a priest and two male psychiatrists. All three counselors convinced Susan's parents that she could not be a lesbian since she had engaged in "normal" adolescent activities, such as dating boys. On the counselor's advice, the summer after the first call Susan's parents forced her to: halt all communication with any of her Wheaton

friends, after writing to each of them that she was not a lesbian and wanted no part of their community; destroy all letters, tapes and photographs in any way related to her friends; and send back artwork, clothes, or other gifts from Wheaton friends. Susan's parents withdrew her from school for a semester.

Susan's parents also reacted strongly when they received a second phone call in March of 1985, just two weeks after Susan became involved with her first woman lover. They told her about the call over the summer. "We know everything you have done at Wheaton this last semester," they said, "and you don't have a choice: you are not gay." Susan

said they became violent when she tried to leave and "made me sit down and listen for three hours to the sins of homosexuality."

After "Peg's" mother received a call in June of 1985, she read her daughter's diary and threatened to kill her if she continued seeing her lover. Peg denied she was a lesbian. She believes her mother may have received a second call, since she recently told Peg details about Peg's current lover and then disowned her, stating she "will not tolerate [Peg] molesting young girls at Wheaton."

Student Reaction

Knowledge of the phone calls among Wheaton lesbians has both induced extreme fear, and also

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News Notes

quote of the week

"[I'm] proud to do what I can to help. AIDS is not restricted to any one age group, or color or creed. Quite simply it's a people's disease, and it's going to be conquered this way — by people pulling together."
— Dionne Warwick, on her participation in the Boston Against AIDS event, Dec. 4.

elected and appointed lesbians and gay men meet

WEST HOLLYWOOD — The First National Conference of Openly Lesbian and Gay Elected and Appointed Officials was held here on the weekend of November 22. The conference was attended by approximately 100 people, 12 of whom were elected officials. Of those 12, ten were men and two were lesbians, one was a Republican and eleven were Democrats, and all were white.

A major portion of the elected officials' weekend was spent drafting a press statement reflecting their collective priorities. This proved a difficult task, given their different political views. For example, a proposal by Boston City Councillor David Scondras, a Democrat, calling for a march on Washington in 1986 was not included in the statement because some people did not agree it would be an effective tactic. Scondras had proposed that next year be "a gay pride year in which we can take our struggle to the man in charge and get the justice we deserve."

The press statement also omitted mention of defense spending. Reference to economic issues had to be worded carefully to please everyone.

The final document, which was arrived at by consensus, pleased everyone, according to Lunenburg, Mass. Town Clerk Bob Ebersole, a Republican. It called for such things as "efforts to ensure that food, shelter, and health care, education, and the effective delivery of government services are available to all people regardless of income," "a multiple strategy to deal with AIDS and AIDS-related illnesses," domestic partners legislation for lesbian and gay couples, and passage of the Equal Rights Amendment.

— Kim Westheimer

airplanes allegedly humanitarian

BOSTON — In a noon-hour picket on November 25, some 50 members of the Boston Pledge of Resistance demanded congressional response to recent escalations in U.S. aggressions against the peoples of Central America. Of primary concern to many of the protesters was the redefinition of the "non-lethal" aid to the anti-Sandinista contras to include aircraft, trucks, communications equipment, and CIA intelligence trainings.

Literature produced for the event also opposed President Reagan's executive decision to use discretionary funds to train the notorious El Salvadoran police, and the lack of U.S. governmental protest against the threatened deportation from Guatemala of six members of the International Peace Brigade. Demonstrators expressed fear for the lives of Guatemalan human rights activists if their Peace Brigade bodyguards are deported.

— Loie Hayes

how to be a supportive lesbian

CONCORD, NH — New Hampshire Lesbians Supportive Services is beginning a six-week volunteer training session, Mondays, 6:30-9:30 pm., starting January 6, 1986, for lesbians interested in crisis line and community-building projects. Topics will include: an overview of violence against lesbians, internalized homophobia, lesbian battering, incest, and suicide. Special emphasis will be placed on crisis intervention, values clarification, and forming a lesbian community.

To schedule a pre-training interview, write to NHLSS, P.O. Box 2335, Concord, NH 03301, or contact Sharon Vardatira at (603) 625-5785 (weekdays) after Monday, December 30.

— Sharon Vardatira

open door policy

CAMBRIDGE, MA — In an effort to stop "lewd and lascivious behavior" in a men's room on campus, the Harvard administration will remove the doors from toilet stalls, according to the *Harvard Crimson*.

The action resulted from two formal complaints, one from an undergraduate, the other from a Harvard employee, of "homosexual activity" in the Harvard Science Center tea room. The complaints, which were filed last month, alleged "indecent exposure," as well as "lewd and lascivious behavior" in the men's room.

The activity in the tea room has existed for some time, but the administration said nothing could be done until formal complaints were filed. Dean of Students Archie C. Epps III said that removing stall doors "is a standard solution" to what he sees as a problem. "It probably means that people won't use the place anymore," he said.

— Francis Alix

ncbg meets with essence

NEW YORK — Representatives of the country's only national Black gay and lesbian political organization met with the editors of the nation's most widely circulated magazine for Black women in an effort to provide the editors with accurate information about Black gay men and lesbians, according to the *Bay Area Reporter*.

Gil Gerald, executive director of the National Coalition of Black Gays (NCGB), and NCBG board members Barbara Smith and Betty Powell met on October 17 with *Essence* editor Susan Taylor and special projects editor Cheryll Greene. Smith led the NCBG delegation in a review of past articles in *Essence* dealing with the gay and lesbian community.

According to Smith, "The meeting was an important first step in getting information about the Black gay movement to a wider audience." Powell said the meeting was a "historic moment that will begin to change the ways our lives are presented to our families and communities."

Essence, which is New York-based, has a circulation of 800,000. NCBG describes itself as "the only national gay, political, educational, and service organization whose focus is to promote the healthy development of the Black gay community."

— Marcos Bisticas-Cocoves



boston rocks against aids

BOSTON — Dionne Warwick (left) and Cyndi Lauper demonstrate a touch of sisterhood and a determination to raise support for their brothers and sisters affected by AIDS. The music stars joined AIDS Action Committee Executive Director Larry Kessler and WBCN-FM disc jockey and Boston Against AIDS organizer Charles Laquidara at a press conference before the Boston Against AIDS concert held at the Metro Dance Club, Dec. 4.

Two thousand people paid \$50 each to squeeze into the club, raising \$100,000 for the AIDS Action Committee and the AIDS Research Unit of Mass General Hospital.

In reference to the organizers' lack of experience with AIDS work, and apparently with the gay and lesbian community as well, AAC fundraising committee chairperson Harry Collings told the *Boston Globe*, "What struck me was how much they wanted to learn about the [AIDS] issue. That was great. Because of who they were, we knew they would be reaching out to the general population in incredible numbers, people we couldn't reach."

The event drew a crowd mixed in terms of sexuality, gender, and race, and was perhaps the first AIDS fundraising event to include a number of sports celebrities among its sponsors.

brookline okays students with aids

BROOKLINE, MA — The Brookline School Committee voted unanimously on November 21 to adopt a policy allowing students with AIDS to attend school here provided that they are not likely to transmit the disease to others, according to the *Tab*.

Brookline would bar children with AIDS from school only if they have open sores or lesions, are frequently incontinent, or have behavioral problems that would lead them to bite. The policy would also bar students who are too ill to study.

No community member had contracted the syndrome at the time the policy was formulated. "We're in better shape to face AIDS with a policy in place, than trying to react when it occurs," remarked School Committee Chair Robert McCain.

The names of students with AIDS will be supplied to the state public health department's division of communicable diseases, the school superintendent, and the particular school's principal, school nurse, and guidance counselor. The policy claims that the names will remain confidential.

According to McCain, the school committee will consider a policy for school staff within the next month.

Currently, there are nine pediatric cases of AIDS diagnosed in Massachusetts, of whom three are attending school.

— Sib Connor

indiana's faulty logic

INDIANAPOLIS — The state health director may close all of Indiana's gay bars, baths, bookstores, and movie houses in an attempt to halt the spread of AIDS, according to the *Works*.

According to Mike Androvett of WISH-TV here, Indiana Commissioner of Public Health Woodrow Myers met with Marion County Prosecutor Stephen Goldsmith and members of the Marion County Board of Health to discuss legal methods of closing all places in the county where gay men might congregate. It was later revealed that Myers' plan encompassed the whole state. Reports indicate that the commissioner reasons that if gay businesses close, gay men cannot meet, that if gay men cannot meet, they cannot have sex, and that if gay men cannot have sex, the AIDS epidemic will cease.

Local gay and lesbian groups are mobilizing to fight the threat posed by the state. Justice, a statewide gay and lesbian organization, issued a statement on November 16 opposing the closure of any gay and lesbian business, calling the intended action "a severely homophobic response to the AIDS issue" and not a means of preventing AIDS.

Sources in the state health department say that Myers will take some action on closure in mid-January.

Marcos Bisticas-Cocoves

one out of eight women students raped

One out of eight women students report having been raped, almost half by first dates, casual dates, or romantic acquaintances, according to preliminary results of a *MS* magazine-sponsored survey of one thousand students at thirty-five universities. The study, reported in the *New York Times* and *Sojourner*, will survey 6,500 students over a three-year period.

— Kim Westheimer

boston human rights commission gives awards

BOSTON — In honor of International Human Rights Day, the Boston Human Rights Commission sponsored a celebration and awards ceremony on December 10.

An award was given to Alex Rodriguez, chair of the Massachusetts Commission on Discrimination. In accepting the award, Rodriguez praised the Flynn and Dukakis administrations for their roles in fighting racism, sexism, able-bodyism, and heterosexism. While no one publicly commented on Rodriguez' praise for Dukakis, several people privately criticized his commendation in light of Dukakis' heterosexist foster care policy.

Awards were also given to Sister Carol Rossi of the Boston Ecumenical Council; An Vo, a Vietnamese man involved in Project Welcome of the East Boston Ecumenical Council; and William Johnston, head of the Community Disorders Unit of the Boston Police Department.

Speaking at the event were Mayor Flynn; Frederick Mandel, the openly gay executive director of the Human Rights Commission; Tahamba Vilakazi, of the South African Relief Inc.; and Karin Aguilar-San Juan, a lesbian from Friends of the Filipino People.

Vilakazi, who is from South Africa, stressed that the denial of human rights in South Africa affects all people. He commended Flynn, Dukakis, and the city council for "realizing the universality of human rights."

Aguilar-San Juan gave a brief history of martial law in the Philippines. She cautioned that the U.S. media are preparing the public for military involvement in the Philippines, similar to U.S. involvement in El Salvador.

— Kim Westheimer

dyke keeps tyke

JUNEAU, AK — A lesbian here has won a battle in the state supreme court to keep her son, according to the *Works*.

The boy's father had challenged the woman's right to custody, arguing that her lesbianism would adversely affect the child's life. However, the Alaska Supreme Court, citing in part the 1984 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Palmore v. Sidoti*, ruled that "social stigma may not be the basis for a custody decision. Simply put, it is impermissible to rely on any real or imagined social stigma attached to the mother's status as a lesbian."

— Marcos Bisticas-Cocoves

correction

A News Note in last week's paper (Vol. 13, No. 22) on the annual awards ceremony sponsored by the Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Caucus (BLGPA) erroneously omitted one of the award recipients — the Boston Lesbian/Gay Pride Committee. We regret the error.

Activist Academics Resist Rightward Trends on Campuses

Lesbian-Feminist Continues Fight for Tenure

By Tatiana Schreiber

SANTA CRUZ, CA — In hearings on technicalities in October and November, 1985, Nancy Stoller Shaw won the right to proceed with her case against the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) for denying her tenure in 1982. Shaw, a lesbian-feminist sociology professor, has united feminist activists and academics in what is seen by many as a particularly clear-cut fight against political repression and threats to academic freedom.

The rulings, which allow Shaw's case to be tried in the state courts, are the most recent technical victories in her continuing struggle to resolve her case, either by jury trial or out-of-court settlement. She is charging sex discrimination under Title VII (the 1964 Civil Rights Act) and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act. Her attorneys are also filing a writ of mandate challenging UCSC Chancellor David Sinsheimer on procedural violations in the tenure decision-making process.

There have been several recent victories for progressive, feminist scholars in academia. Last week Harvard University finally caved in to charges of sex discrimination and granted tenure to Theda Skocpol, a left-wing sociology professor who was denied tenure five years ago. But, according to Virginia Cyrus of the National Women's Studies Association, even when victory is the eventual outcome, the battles can take up to seven years, cost thousands of dollars, and inflict extreme emotional stress on women who persist in the fight.

Tenure decisions are usually based on numerous evaluations of a person's scholarship, teaching ability, university and community service, and such subjective concepts as "ambition" and whether or not the candidate demonstrates "a certain amount of promise."

That last criterion was the ostensible reason Marion Namenwirth, a zoologist, was recently denied tenure at the University of Wisconsin. In a recent decision on Namenwirth's case in federal district court in Chicago, the judge

academic should be."

Shaw is the author of *Forced Labor: Maternity Care in the United States*, as well as numerous papers on feminism, women prisoners, and community health. "A lot of my work involved applied sociology," Shaw said, meaning that it was work directly relevant to social change. In looking at health care of women prisoners, Shaw was motivated by concern for the women inside. "I looked at it not to see how to provide the most profit, but to ask, 'Can there be quality medical care in a jail?'"

Apparently these are not the sort of questions "scholars" ought to be asking. Steve Reed, director of public relations at UCSC, said Shaw produced "insufficient and inadequate original research." Her work was also termed "not scholarly enough," "too narrowly focused," and "more like that of a good investigative journalist than a tenure-track candidate."

Shaw's supporters have reacted angrily to this assessment. In a recent letter soliciting money for Shaw's defense, Tillie Olsen and Adrienne Rich denounced the denial of tenure as "a direct attack on feminist scholarship," calling on members of the feminist community to help "protect the few hard-fought gains we have made." The letter continues, "We find it outrageous that Professor Shaw's work is seen as 'inappropriate' at the university. It is focused primarily on health care of women in hospitals and prisons, with special emphasis on minority and low-income women. Professor Shaw is a highly trained scholar and researcher using her academic skills responsibly."

The History of the Case

Shaw's supporters include three lawyers with long experience in academic freedom and political cases. Lead attorney Doris Brin Walker's record includes the successful defense of Angela Davis at her 1972 murder trial. Walker says Shaw's case, on the facts, is one of the best tenure cases she has heard about because of the endorsements Shaw received from her academic peers and her dean. A second-level review, called for by the chancellor, also recommended Shaw for tenure. Despite this, and supportive letters from numerous colleagues and community members, Chancellor Sinsheimer denied tenure to Shaw in May, 1982.

Shaw appealed the decision to UCSC's Committee on Privilege and Tenure (PTC), which conducted a year-long review of her case. The PTC ruled six to zero that Shaw's faculty rights had been violated and that in weighing Shaw's political views, Sinsheimer had violated a university regulation expressly forbidding political opinion having any role in personnel decisions. Following the PTC ruling, Sinsheimer disqualified himself and turned the case over to University of California President David Saxon. Saxon overruled the PTC but authorized Shaw to continue teaching another year.

In April, 1984, the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) ruled that there was reasonable cause to believe Shaw was denied promotion and tenure because of her sex. The EEOC gave UCSC a six-month period to begin "conciliation procedures." None were ever offered.

This was the first EEOC finding of sex discrimination in the University of California system. Shaw believes the ruling shows her case has merit. "It helps me to feel I'm not crazy," she said. "The EEOC is very conservative now, so they really must have felt my case was blatant." Shaw filed her case in Alameda County Superior Court in May, 1984. Since that time the case has been removed from state court to federal court and back again. The university appealed to the EEOC to change its ruling, with no success.

The case is now expected to come to court in the next year if it is not settled out of court sooner. Shaw thinks an out-of-court settlement is still likely: "They don't want the case to come to trial because they don't want the sexism and political bias of the Chancellor to come to light."

Chancellor Sinsheimer would not comment on the case to *GCN* because it is in litigation. Lawyers for the university contend that political bias is not an issue and that the only charge being discussed is that of sex discrimination.

"The university is raising every technical obstacle it possibly can," attorney Walker noted. "It's all part of the overall tactic to make this as lengthy and expensive as possible." The University of California, a state-supported school, has the services of the General Council's office at its disposal. As treasurer of Shaw's defense fund, Peter Meyer, put it, "They seem to be willing to spend almost unlimited amount of the taxpayers' money."

Shaw's suit requests reinstatement, tenure, promotion, costs, and punitive damages. She is particularly anxious to recoup fees for her lawyers, who she says have been working at minimal or no salaries. Shaw and her supporters are determined to continue the fight until they win.

Widespread support around the underlying issues

Support for Shaw has come from a variety of sources both outside and inside of academia, reflecting the range of issues raised by her case. The Santa Cruz and Bay Area women's communities have rallied behind her, holding events such as a candlelight vigil and a benefit concert at the Oakland women's bar Ollie's, where headliners included Linda Tillery and Rhiannon.

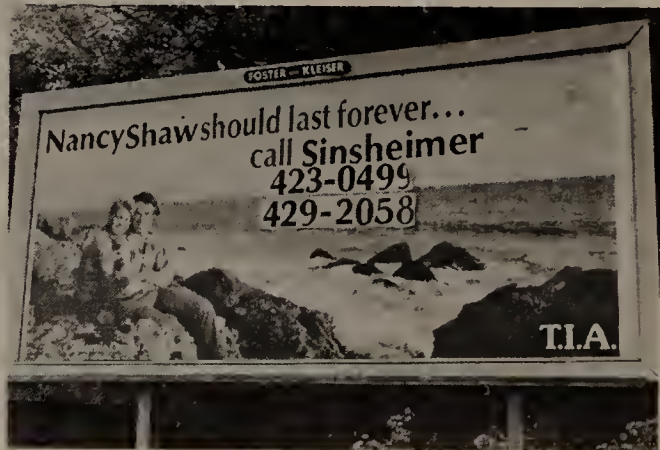
Shaw's case was "adopted" by the American Association of University Women as one of several key sex discrimination cases the AAUW supports. The Task Force on Discrimination of the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) gave \$500 towards Shaw's defense, and the American Sociological Association (ASA) had contributed \$1000 to the case. In an unusual move, the ASA also formally censured the University of California for "grave violations" of due process.

The power of top administrators to override faculty

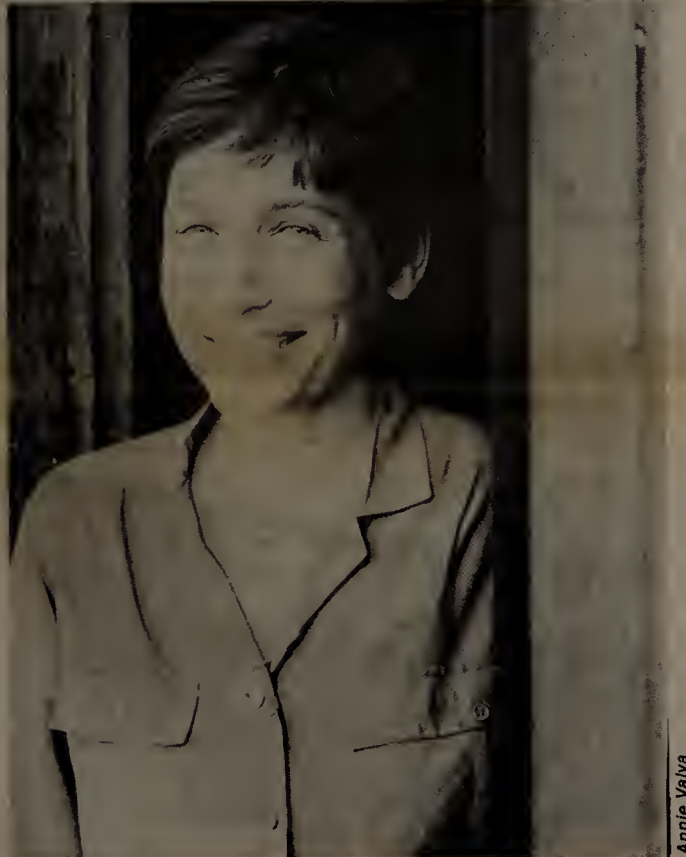
opinion in tenure cases is being used more and more frequently, according to NWSA member Virginia Cyrus. Commenting on Shaw's case, Cyrus said, "What I see is one man with whatever bigotry he is operating under have capricious control over the tenure decision." Other college faculty members claim their influence in the tenure and promotions arena is rapidly waning. Moves to unionize faculty may counter this trend, as may more battles like the one Nancy Shaw is waging.

Commenting on the ASA censure, Shaw said, "I think they were offended by the attack on sociology as a discipline and the right of sociologists to use established methods of research." Shaw's work, like that of most sociologists, anthropologists, and other social scientists, includes qualitative as well as quantitative data; it was this qualitative work that was deemed by Sinsheimer to be "not scholarly."

Sinsheimer, a biologist, has said in speeches that as a scientist he has to believe in a value-free science. But, says Shaw, "A belief in a value-free science ensures that those



Notorious Santa Cruz billboard artists 'Truth in Advertising' (T.I.A.) doctored this sign to provide Shaw supporters with Chancellor Sinsheimer's home phone number.



Nancy Shaw

ruled that it is not sex discrimination to deny a female faculty member tenure because she has not earned the "esteem" of her male colleagues.

But esteem can be hard to come by if your politics threaten the authority of male decision-makers. Annis Pratt, a professor of English and Women's Studies at the University of Wisconsin, put it bluntly. "If the university doesn't want someone, they can come up with any reason and get it believed. 'Narrow' means focused on women. 'Not significant' means about women."

Shaw and her supporters believe that in her case the unanimous recommendations she had received from her department, her college, and the dean of social sciences make it abundantly clear that it is the political nature of her work that made her the target of unusually intense scrutiny by Chancellor Sinsheimer when he reviewed her case for tenure. "He [Sinsheimer] took all my files home at night," Shaw told *GCN*. "He sort of obsessed over it." Indeed, Sinsheimer wrote in a letter to a colleague that he had spent more time on Shaw's case than any other in his five years as chancellor.

Shaw was hired in 1973 to teach in the Community Studies program at UCSC's Oakes College. Oakes was founded in the early '70s to focus attention on issues of ethnicity and equality. Shaw was attracted to the university, she said, "exactly because I had a concern about social issues and a perspective of responding to injustice."

Shaw brought her activist background to the classes she taught, and knowing her changed people. "It was the beginning of my radicalization," recalled Louise Gross, a former student of Shaw's who is now a secretary at Oakes College active in Shaw's defense. "This is typical of everyone she came in contact with."

Shaw was outspoken at UCSC about her political views and also about her lesbianism. Although sexual preference never came up explicitly in the Chancellor's explanation of his decision, Shaw feels it was part of the difficulty he had with her. "If I had been a lesbian who was really quiet and well-behaved it probably wouldn't have mattered. But I was a woman who didn't fit his notion of what a woman or an

who can pay for the science, like corporations and governments, get what they want," and this has a conservatizing effect on academic research.

UCSC public relations director Steve Reed admits it is the marketplace that largely determines where the university will put its resources. "Students are banging on the door demanding computer engineering.... We have to respond." Reed believes the pendulum swing towards the social science in the '60s and early '70s is reversing itself now.

Peter Meyer, former UCSC economics professor, concurs. Meyer remembers Oakes College in its early days as "a wonderful place" with a high proportion of women teachers and teachers from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds. "All that's ending," Meyer said, "because the administration is getting rid of all the women, Black, and gay faculty."

Shaw sees the administration at UCSC moving towards closer ties with the military-industrial complex and a heavier emphasis on science and engineering. At a traditionally liberal, experimental campus like UCSC this charge might come as a surprise to some observers. But Shaw contends that changes are hidden beneath a surface commitment to women's studies and domestic Third World issues. A college focused on such issues "[has] tremendous publicity value," says Shaw. But the university administration "[wants] to turn the Blacks, Chicanos, and poor whites...into mirrors of the white and middle-class students on campus," rather than seeing Oakes College faculty take a value stance in the world in terms of the issues facing students in those communities.

Distinguishing between "women's" and "feminist" studies, Shaw said, "Women can be studied as objects and not recognized as actors in the research process or even as actors in their own lives." Feminist studies are in a more precarious position in academia, according to Shaw, because they contain values which challenge the whole nature of authority on which the university system is based.

The growing conservatism on campuses worries other feminist scholars as well. "I think the sense of repression is much stronger now than five years ago," said Sandra Pollack, a liberal arts and humanities teacher at a community college in central New York. "Reagan has given permission to be ultra-American.... It's very disheartening."

Stanford University professor Estelle Freedman, who recently won her own tenure fight, noted, "You're vulnerable if the questions you are asking come out of political concerns even if your scholarly methods are good. It means closeting your feminism."

Despite the pessimism some women feel, members of Shaw's defense committee and the network of feminists who are lending their experience and support to her case see hope in the ability of someone like Nancy Shaw to unite academic and community people in a fight against political repression and threats to academic freedom.

"We need to stand up for people who are doing work like Nancy was doing," said supporter Louise Gross. "She was in a position of making change."

"She's a lesbian," said another supporter. "It's just another form of oppression against us, and we can't let the university get away with it."

Shaw's case has been kept visible by benefit concerts, vigils, demonstrations, and campaigns to barrage Chancellor Sinsheimer with phone calls. Her defense committee raises \$1500 to \$2000 a month, but much more is needed. The next stage of the legal process involves gathering more depositions and other evidence. Total litigation costs may reach more than \$100,000.

Despite the financial burden and emotional costs, Shaw has gained strength from the fight. "It's wonderful to see

Continued on page 11

Community Voices

GCN welcomes letters to the editor. If possible, they should be TYPED and DOUBLESPACED, and where possible limited to five typed pages. They should be sent to: Community Voices, GCN, 167 Tremont St. #5, Boston, MA 02111.

surveys (cont'd.)

Dear GCN:

In his essay "Sex and Science: Who Decides What's Good for Us?" (23 November 1985), Scott Tucker raises a variety of important questions about the survey published as a paid ad in the 19 October issue. I would like to guess at answers to two of Tucker's questions; before doing so, I should make it clear that I have no relevant professional training (though I have done some reading) and that I have no knowledge of the survey's originators or their intentions.

The first question is, Why should lesbians and gay men cooperate in answering the questionnaire at hand? One answer might be that the questionnaire might aid in the identification of a group of people who are genetically predisposed to ARC/AIDS; this group of people would cut across all the groups now known to be predisposed as a result of specific behaviors (or, in the case of newborns, their parents' specific behaviors). This genetically predisposed group could be made the focus of special educational efforts. I should stress that such efforts could never replace the broader educational campaigns needed to address the thousands of people "behaviorally at-risk" for the disease who have no knowledge of their genetic backgrounds (as a result of, e.g., adoption, as in my own case).

The second question is, Why do the survey's originators not explain what they are up to? One answer (apart from technical matters of survey design) might be that they wish to avoid unnecessary worry or panic. There are two phases of current research that are relevant, and Scott Tucker outlined both of them well. One involves neuroimmunology; Norman Geschwind observed the cooccurrence, across families, of left-handedness, certain neurological phenomena (exceptional talent, for example, or dyslexia), and auto-immune diseases. In an overstated example, we might find a left-handed parent who has one child who is a musical prodigy, another who is autistic, yet another who has lupus (all three right-handed), and three other children who have no traces of the phenomena. The other relevant phase of research involves human embryology and the role played by hormones during fetal development. Geschwind speculated that the patterns of co-occurrence he observed could be explained by referring to hormones during development; the success or not of his attempted explanation is, as I understand it, independent of the patterns he observed.

The survey under discussion, it seems, refers only to the patterns Geschwind and his colleagues noted; the explanation of those observations is quite distinct. In fact the scientific status of those observations themselves is open to scrutiny; research on them is in the early stages. The application of such research to so complex a public health issue as ARC/AIDS is a delicate matter. One might guess that the survey's originators felt it better to state no hypothesis rather than try to phrase their hypothesis with enough care so that it would be understood by GCN's audience. If this guess is correct, we would have an instance of the insufferable condescension of health-care professionals.

A further question may be framed — Who is it the survey's originators are afraid of? I cannot see a clear answer to this. It could be the professional community to which they belong; if so, who is paying for the ad, they themselves or the institutions with which they are affiliated? (The last health-related full-page ads in GCN were, it seems to me, the odious effluvia of the American Liver Foundation, ads which in the end GCN refused to continue to print.) It could be the gay community that the originators are afraid of; if so, we need to ask if the level of discussion of health issues in the gay community has been so low, so fault-finding, so anti-intellectual, so paranoid as to justify such fear. I do not think so, and I believe Scott Tucker's essay goes some way toward proving the point.

Sincerely,
Michael Patrick O'Connor
Ann Arbor, MI

P.S. It may be relevant to note that auto-immune diseases such as lupus are generally distinct from AIDS, except in that all involve the immune system. Unfortunately, in the current issue of *Christopher Street* (Issue 96, appeared late October 1985) AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is erroneously glossed as Auto-Immune Deficiency Syndrome (page 34). This is yet another example of the madcap copyediting characteristic of CS these days. It need hardly be observed that GCN's standards are vastly higher.

A brief summary of some of the relevant scientific research is provided by Jo Durden-Smith and Diane DeSimone, "Hidden Threads of Illness," the hypotheses can be found in Norman Geschwind and A.M. Galaburda, "Cerebral Lateralization: Biological Mechanism, Associations, and Pathology," *Archives of Neurology* 42 (May 1985), 428-459; (June 1985), 521-552; (July 1985), 634-654; the very-brief discussion of homosexuality occurs at 546.

satisfied

Dear GCN:

This is just a short note to say thanks for all you [GCN] have helped me with. The support group I was attempting to organize at Taycheedah [women's prison] had trouble. But a woman answered my [GCN] article and we met and discussed it all. She had a meeting with the warden, clinical service, and the ass. warden. They met for quite a few hours and after their meeting she came to give me the news — it's been approved.

There's just one thing — it isn't just for lesbians. My first article that you printed was on the straight womyn's games here and the oppression we lesbians deal with each day. This group will be open to anyone. It's going to be called "Coping With Caring Relationships." This is a start in trying to deal with the straight womyn's games and also in helping those who are confused, whether it be with a relationship with a man or a woman. I'm satisfied. The woman who will be running the group also has a dating service for homosexuals and straight people. So, she is very educated on both. I know she'll do just fine. We lesbian womyn will be able to go and share our common problems, and get support. And hopefully womyn who "play the game" will attend and can be "called" on their shit. I'll inform you more of what happens once I find out.

In the struggle,
Jackie Beattie,
Milwaukee, WI

slavery and social control

Dear GCN:

Hello. This is your little gay radical stuck down in the Texas Dept. of Corruptions. You was asking about the ways that the man divides prisoners. I thought I would comment on this, but to examine our oppression it is necessary to see it from the approach that *all* people are divided from each other by many means; so that GCN readers can identify with what I'm saying.

[This was a MANY-paged letter. Summarizing the part not specifically about prisons and the domestic repression business, he gave a description of our growing up in a society where money is power (because most people let it be; i.e. don't care enough to help build other kinds of power; and of power abuses (police, judges, lawyers, prison officials, etc) that come from lack of accountability to the people and lack of interest on the people's part; politically the poor (only powerless as individuals) are unrepresented ("taxation without representation"), excluded from activities requiring money or things money buys (education, etc), and controlled (directly) by

Defense Committee Update

Two planning meetings are underway to coordinate a **confrontation on January 2** with Gov. Michael Dukakis and Human Services Secretary Phil Johnston. Both legal action and civil disobedience are planned. The planning meetings will be held December 19 and 26 at 7:30 p.m. at 67 Pleasant St. in Cambridge. Call 628-6007 for more information.

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GCN particularly encourages gay men and lesbians of color to apply.

the middle classes (managers, yuppies, guppies, etc, etc)]

Prisoners are *slaves*. The 13th Amendment of the U.S. allows one class of people to be subject to *slavery* in America. ["Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude *except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted* shall exist within the U.S. or any place subject to their jurisdiction."]

So who is the modern slave master? Is it the warden of the prison unit or the director of the prison system? No, obviously it's the politicians who make the laws, and indirectly the people who elect them.

In an age when Blacks were enslaved, a Black who spoke back or struck a slave master was considered to be *mad*. Who else would attack a force that could literally tear you into pieces? His punishment was death or imprisonment as no other form of social control exists to control those out of (social) control.

In prisons today a few cosmetic changes have been made [prisoners' rights: but it's a small list and you'd better be "educated" if you want to understand it.], but one of the basic laws to slavery is to keep the slave ignorant of his condition (possibilities). Knowledge is the power stronger than simple force and the key to ending the state of slavery.

Nowadays, however, without the brutal force to control slaves except in the most extreme conditions (e.g. escape, rebellion, etc.), the slave masters have had to turn to different tactics of control.

First, they had to find ways of limiting the use of knowledge by the slaves. Even though limited (privileged) education is sometimes available, the masters make sure that it is restricted to good slaves [NOT in 'protective' custody, for example, where many gay people are] and they do their best to keep the slaves from cooperating and teaching each other, especially around "the Law."

Schools in prisons do not teach knowledge which is applicable to the slave's present condition or to understanding his class, race and sex conditions. Those who try to assist their fellow slaves with what they have learned are "encouraged" not to, and if this fails, are harassed.

The newest trend in political manipulation by the slave masters involves their using cultural and racist groups to create a condition of chaos and violence inside by using systems of rewards and punishments in a racist discriminatory manner; for example, allowing an increase of contraband (drugs, weapons, etc.) inside to create a power struggle between the slaves of different races. They also have a system of informants who are rewarded with earlier releases if they tell all.

Sex, a key to prison control, is also manipulated. Who can and can't have sex (sometimes the police 'take notice,' sometimes they don't), who with, and on whose terms are all parts of their manipulation; out gays are segregated if they get too "out" (especially if they litigate against the prison) or else they are placed in life threatening situations (with homophobes).

As gays on the outside get more "respectability" this has led to bias against those of us inside (for whatever reasons). Gays inside would do well to expose this prejudice and the source of this dividing of gay people into the good and the bad, and to study for political and legal knowledge to help all of us to throw off our more comfortable (more 'secure') chains.

Darrell Hay
263672 Goree
PO Box 38
Huntsville, TX 77344

Cover design by Amy Groves

GayCommunityNews

Gay Community News is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of eleven, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership. The paper is published weekly (except a week in December and a week in August) by the Bromfield Street Education Foundation, Inc., a non-profit corporation.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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This guide provides a listing of lesbian and gay owned, staffed, or supportive businesses and services. For details about having your business listed for just \$100 per year, please call Laurie Sherman at 426-4469.

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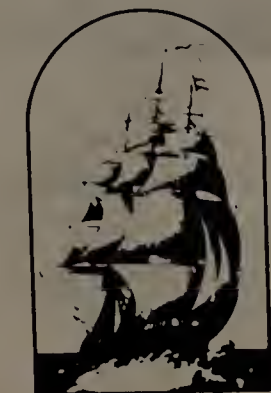
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Nancy Vogl blends music with message. Flat-picking up a Storm

By Nan Donald

Blending music and politics is always a delicate endeavor, but Nancy Vogl showed a near-perfect sense of balance during her Nov. 20 performance in Cambridge. She moved easily from folk and country to jazz and "new acoustic," while covering a wide variety of personal and political topics, as well as a stunning selection of instrumental pieces.

Originally known as a founding member of the groundbreaking lesbian feminist Berkeley Women's Music Collective, and for her work with Holly Near, Robin Flower, Barbara Higbie, and Woody Simmons, Vogl is now making a name for herself as a compelling solo performer.

singer, fiddler, and acoustic bass player.

Special guest Susann Shanbaum added harmonica to the second tune, "Over Losing," giving the song an authentic, blues-y feel. Admitting that the song was autobiographical, Vogl recalled she "felt like the five quarts left on your driveway after an oil change" while writing it.

The audience was thoroughly warmed up by the time she finished her third piece, a vigorous medley of flat-picked fiddle tunes she had originally performed with Robin Flower.

Vogl packs punch and precision in her picking technique, which gives her a solid, energetic,

Vogl answered for herself with her bittersweet "Fight of the Dancer," which she teasingly described as "woeful, but more poignant than woeful." One of the best songs of the evening, she will, I hope, record it at some point.

Vogl delighted the audience with a tongue-in-cheek recitation from, if memory serves me right, the *Cautionary Tales for Children*. The selection she chose was one her mother used to read her, and concerned a boy named Jim who gave his nanny the slip at a zoo, only to be devoured by a lion.

She closed her first set with "Three Mile Run," one of the more political songs off the album. Vogl described it as "the first song



Nancy Vogl

Her recent album, *Something to Go On* (Redwood Records), is easily one of the best of the past year's women's music releases. The first side is devoted to acoustic guitar instrumentals performed by both Vogl and fellow Berkeley Women's Music Collective alumna Susann Shanbaum, who now lives in the Boston area. The second side is a collection of topical themes and love songs, featuring session work by women's music "heavies" Holly Near, Mary Watkins, Linda Tillery, Robin Flower, and others.

Vogl performed most of the material from her new album, and filled out the night with selections spanning her 12 years as a professional musician. She opened the show with the country-flavored "I Don't Know Why," written by her friend Laurie Lewis, a West Coast

squeaky-clean sound. She has a unique voice, warm and earnest, with just enough roughness around the edges to keep it interesting. If her stage presence were to be summed up in one word, it would have to be "confident."

Much of Vogl's appeal lies in her completely down-to-earth, unpretentious manner, her willingness to take risks on stage, and her infectious, wry sense of humor and impish grin. She blistered through "Lime Rock," a brand new addition to her repertoire, after warning the crowd that they might hear a wrong note here or there and that they also had to pretend they were in a 1955 Keystone Kops cartoon.

After asking the audience if anyone in Boston had ever fallen in love with the wrong person,

I ever wrote which said what I wanted to say." She wrote it about three women who consistently spoke out against injustices and suffered violent, allegedly accidental deaths: Karen Silkwood, tenant activist Yulanda Ward of Washington D.C., and Anna Mae Pictou Aquash, a member of the American Indian Movement (A.I.M.). The underlying message of the song, which is essentially a series of tense vignettes of the women's last minutes, is that speech in this country is free until people start to listen, and then the price may be death.

"Something to Go On," her moody title cut, began the second half of the evening. Another autobiographical piece, it details how thoughts of her lover carry

Continued on page 11

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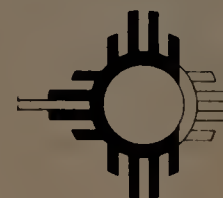
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The Gay Male Couple Coloring Book

Perfect Couple Creation

By Larry Hitt

I'd like you to meet Ralph, my lover of 7 months, 12 days, 9 hours and — what time do you have, Ralph? — 47 minutes. No, Ralph doesn't care for any chips, thank you.

When I first found Ralph, he was a lost soul, running around with a different trick every night. No, Ralph, it was *not* fun. Be a good boy and go freshen my drink.

My, you've done wonders with this place. Who would have thought — a reconverted slaughterhouse? I put my heart and soul into my place. I wanted to build something with my own hands. It took months, but finally it was livable. The floors had been restored to their original persimmon. The fuchsias were in place. But after the contractors had gone, I took a good look around, and something was missing.

Then it came to me. I was ready for the final stage of growth. I was ready to become a Gay Male Couple. But how to go about it?

I decided to advertise. I'm in advertising, you know. Oh, yes. I designed the ad campaign that put those pictures of missing children on bags of kitty litter. Every time you change the cat box, there are those little faces looking up at you. It has to help. Think about it.

So the search for a mate was underway. I weeded through the responses, narrowing it down. The strain was terrible. But through it

all, I kept thinking of Marie Osmond — standing there at the altar, so brave in white tulle. "Marriage isn't just for life," she said, "it's for eternity." Think about it. Yes, of course, I know they've split. A source close to Marie said she's gained 30 pounds and is often seen crying. I'm praying for her.

Well, one week it all came together. I met Ralph. And I found The Gay Male Couple Coloring Book.

(Oh, if only Marie had had such a coloring book....)

The truth is, Ralph lacked certain basic skills. When the water boiled, he thought it was magic and ran from the room. Now he can make instant coffee for the two of us. Yes, of course he's been decaffeinated.

Sometimes, Ralph would go off in the corner with his crayons and work on Social Scripting, Setting A Table.... I put in extra time on Expressing Feelings. I've thrown

I was ready for the final stage of growth. I was ready to become a Gay Male Couple. But how to go about it?

I knew it wasn't going to be easy. First, I went to work on his appearance. "This is the '80s, Ralph," I told him. "That lumberjack shirt has got to go. Anyway, if you can say it with plaid, it probably didn't need to be said."

Then I took down the coloring book. We divided up the crayons. I gave Ralph to colors that revealed his personality — reserving the brighter colors for myself. Together, we colored in the first page. We were hooked. We spend the next few months coloring in the seven stages of a relationship.

quite a few of Ralph's dishes. It's how I express myself.

When I had colored my way through Nesting, Risking, and Merging, he was still coloring away at Blending. But I followed the instructions and waited for him to catch up. I'm *still* waiting.

Oh, there you are, Ralph. What time do you have? Well, it's been a lovely party (Shake with your right hand, Ralph, your right), but we really must be going. We have to go home and work on commitment. Ralph gives good commitment.

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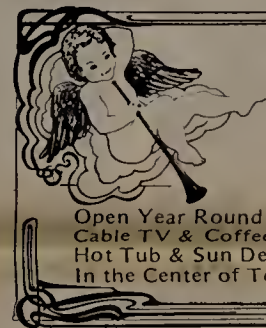


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Cindy sheds her leather jacket and vest to get down to basics: a girl never goes anywhere without her "nightie" — and gloves.

"Come hither," says Jan decked out in jeans, red camisole and a low-slung belt.



In a black, slinky mini-skirt, Joanna revels in that wide-open feeling.

(Center row, left) Now Candy slips into something more comfortable — soft and luscious red, with sushi earrings to tempt a hungry look.

"Proper and provocative" is the way to describe Adrienne's lovely evening dress. See-through insert on the bodice draws the eye and keeps it there.



ly in this lace-up
aily for the
word "vamp."



A day at the beach — Muscie Beach —
with Beth. Now who'd dare kick sand in
her face?



HOT HEAVY

Crowd Wowed by Good Clean Sleaze

They wore leather. They wore lace. They flaunted plunging necklines, daring hemlines, and most of all, *style*. At "Hot and Heavy — An Evening of Good Clean Sleaze," 15 outrageous women strutted their stuff in a benefit fashion show for *Bad Attitude* and *Outrageous Women*, two well-loved but under-financed sex mags for adventurous women.

The glitzy, ultra-high-energy event, held at Somewhere Else on December 8, was created and produced by Judith Stein and Lynn Levine. Ms. Stein authored and read the program's hilariously appropriate script, which was at times drowned out by screams, shouts, sighs, and other appreciative outbursts from the S.R.O. audience. To the delight of the producers and to the staffs of *BA* and *OW*, "Hot and Heavy" netted \$400. Thanks go to the women who invested their time and energy in the show, especially to Meri Lawrence for providing the sultry soundtrack for the evening; to Somewhere Else for donating the space; and to all who came out for an eye-ful of lovely female flesh.

— Linda Burnett

Jan Oxenberg: Funny Dykes on Film

By Nora Janeway

The words "Stomping Dyke" flash on the screen in black-and-white; a motorcycle engine growls softly. A small, dark-haired butch in an enormous studded and zippered black leather jacket climbs off her bike. She lets us admire her for a moment, and then starts off on her trek through Smalltown, U.S.A. We watch from behind as she heads straight into a cluster of hanging-out men who are twice her height. They part before her inexorable approach; she passes through. She saunters on, heedless of the crashed bicyclists and goggle-eyed straight women she leaves in her wake. This is the dyke you always wanted to be, the woman before whose power patriarchal props wither and fall: and when the little butch in the big jacket continues right up to the ocean's edge, it is no surprise when the waves part before her so that she walks the dry sea-bed, water raging on all sides, off into the horizon of our possibilities.

Movie-maker Jan Oxenberg's "Stomping Dyke" is the last of six short black-and-white "Acts" that

together make up her *A Comedy in Six Unnatural Acts*, shown in Boston on November 13. Screened along with Oxenberg's short *Home Movie* and preceded by a humorous rap by the filmmaker herself, *A Comedy in Six Unnatural Acts* addresses in succession six classic lesbian myths, some of them, "theirs," some "ours." Released in 1978, *A Comedy* is lesbianism as we've lived it (but never got to see on film); lesbianism as we were warned about it (though it never came true); and lesbianism as we might have imagined it in our fondest daydreams.

A Comedy in Six Unnatural Acts opens with "The Wallflower." When her Perfect Match finally arrives, it's a fellow bobby-soxer; and the two women exit, kissing. In "Role-Playing," Oxenberg takes a loving look at a woman in tuxedo and tie preparing for her date, smoothing handful after handful of grease into her hair and going off, corsage in hand, to meet her girlfriend. This scene, too, ends with an unexpected twist.

"Seduction" shows us two women in a hilarious scene of mutually desired but mutually tentative seduction. True-to-life

when we transcend the need to own each other as lovers. Meanwhile, the juggler is making a complete mess of things on-screen.

The words "Stomping Dyke" flash on the screen in black-and-white; a motorcycle engine growls softly.

dialogue is successfully mingled with fantasy; Oxenberg surrounds her courting couple with campy and self-consciously overloaded symbolism (prolonged shots of a bubbling hot tub towards which the women are drawn, as they move towards acting on their desire for each other, etc.).

"Non-monogamy" takes on a myth created by "The Lesbian Community." It features an overalls-clad Oxenberg juggling, hiding, dropping, and devouring several pieces of fruit. On the soundtrack, an unseen woman talks earnestly about the freeing-up of our energies which happens

Oxenberg makes a comfortable transition in the six "Acts" from collective autobiography to parody to fantasy. She approaches her subject matter — lesbian mythologies — with that particular kind of double vision common to members of oppressed groups: the intense awareness of both how "they" see us and how "we" see us. *A Comedy in Six Unnatural Acts* is on-target, very lesbian, and very funny.

The *Home Movie* that followed *Comedy* is pieced together from fragments of Oxenberg's own coming-out story. *Home Movie* charts her progress from non-

traditional toddler to woman-identified '50s high-school cheerleader to activist lesbian. Filmed in 1972, it includes shots of an early gay pride march and shots of Oxenberg and her friends, playing tackle football in a slow-motion welter of beatific grins and flying hair and limbs. *Home Movie*, Oxenberg's "student film," is a nice mixture of timeless coming-out saga and historical document.

Oxenberg accompanied showings of her movies this fall with an introductory monologue, delivered in classic stand-up comic style. Her material is solidly lesbian and amusing, but it's a long way from hilarious. She did have some good lines about "professional lesbians" ("I'd love to see those women's resumes") and the "lesbian baby boom" (a 20-year-old lesbian tells her mother that she and her lover have to get married). Lesbian comedy may be cheaper to create than lesbian films, but judging by *A Comedy in Six Unnatural Acts*, Oxenberg has more to offer us as a filmmaker than she does as a comic.

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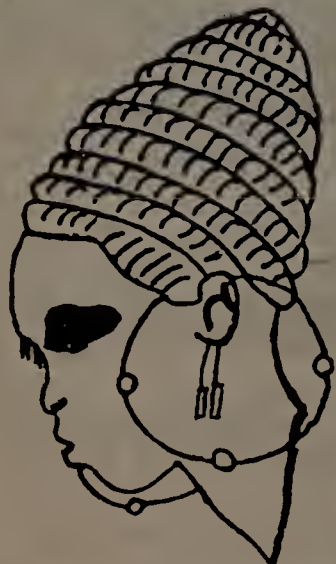


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Gay man seeking friends. I'm a sincere, open minded person. It's very lonely in here. A person feels forgotten when he doesn't get any mail. Please send some sunshine my way. Thanks. Cory Lee SHARP, 118720, PO Box 430, Dillwyn VA 23936.

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Prisoners Seeking Friends

Prisoners and Friends: PROTEST the INDIFFERENCE of 'GAY' Groups! Write letters the following (and others more near to where you are) to teach them that many of the problems prisoners have - from getting in to getting out - ARE 'gay' problems (not just your individual prisoner problems). They need to hear this from MANY of you; otherwise they'll keep saying 'That's his/her problem, not 'ours'. You need to get CLASS ACTION suits going, not just individual protest! • National Gay Rights Advocates, 540 Castro St., San Francisco, CA 94114 (western U.S. only); National Gay Task Force, 80 Fifth Ave, NY, NY 10011; ACLU National Gay Rights Project, 633 So. Shatto Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90005; National Lawyers Guild, Gay Caucus, 558 Capp St., San Francisco CA 94110; Lambda Legal Defense, 132 W. 43rd St., NY, NY 10036 (eastern U.S. only); Texas Human Rights Found., 1519 Maryland, Houston TX 77006 (TX pris only). Do NOT expect immediate results. They will take some time and effort to educate. The more of you who write and make it clear the issues are GAY, the more attention they'll have to pay. (Don't be surprised if you don't get any response at first)

Also write local gay papers and groups: GCN will furnish addresses. Again, don't expect immediate results, they have to be 'educated' (BY YOU!)

PRISONERS & \$\$\$

Note to GCN "outsiders"/penpals: Like anybody, prisoners like to feel they have a certain amount of material (economic) independence. Gay prisoners (especially) are likely to be in some kind of protective custody or else not in the good graces of the administration and so are not in a position to have a job and earn the 50¢ or \$1/day that prisons permit (usually to those who 'cooperate' most with the officials).

It is not unreasonable that they ask for \$5 or so now and then. We at the prisoner project have been surprised at times by how indignant people have become at having been asked for a few bucks. (Big bucks, of course, can be another story, which we have no general comment on.)

If you feel queasy about the money situation, just say so; or that you can't give regularly but just this once, or whatever. It is very discouraging for a prisoner to simply not hear from someone he or she's been writing (because they have decided the prisoner must be a "ripoff" since they asked for some money). Prisons usually do not furnish even the basic toiletries and if you don't have a job or outside family support (which many do not!), or if you don't feel like selling your body, it makes perfect sense for the prisoner to ask for help.

What seems a bit twisted in all this is the way outsiders use money to attempt to buy romance, and then get mad when this doesn't work out. When you want to give some survival/littlethings bucks, go for it; when you expect to get (buy) something in return (like love etc.), best forget it.



TV looking for penpals in the free world [CAN'T WRITE PRISONERS UNFORTUNATELY] I really enjoy getting your paper again, now that we won our battle to get it back! Thanks. Bobby HEFFERMAN, 76641 BKS 16, Box 500, Grady AR 71644.

Coors Distributor

Continued from page 1
that we don't accept."

This type of disagreement regarding Coors beer and political tactics has developed in other parts of the country over the last five years. In an April 1984 editorial *The Sentinel*, a California gay paper, printed, "Coors is not anti-homosexual in their business — or in their politics. The Coors Boycott was started as a San Francisco political deal and was continued in the homosexual community as a rather sick, inept political organizing tool."

The California Guide Magazine printed a letter by Coors public relations person John Meadows, which stated that, "This company has come under the most thorough investigative reporting

of 60 Minutes, the national gay publication *The Advocate*, San Francisco gay publications *The California Voice*, *The Sentinel*, and the *Castro Times*, and all have given Adolph Coors Company a clean bill of health."

Howard Wallace, a gay organizer of the San Francisco Coors Boycott who is being sued by Coors for "conspiracy to put them out of business," believes that many of the gay papers were bought off. "They liked the advertising money," said Wallace. "As far as I understand, the *Castro Times* was funded from the beginning by Coors. Coors was responsible for its existence."

Boycott Legal Sea Foods

Continued from page 1

The London *Observer* reported that in May of 1985, Joseph Coors was involved in the recruitment of "dogs of war" to fight "communist forces in Nicaragua."

John Meadows, a Coors public relations officer, said he did not know if Joe Coors has contributed to contra forces in Nicaragua. Meadows told *GCN* Coors "has supported refugees in Nicaragua, people fleeing from the capital. Some have become contras and some are just fleeing."

As for its business practices, Coors does not deny that it requires that employees take lie-detector tests, a practice outlawed in 23 states. Meadows did deny, however, that employees were ever

asked about their sexual preference with management's knowledge. Boycott organizers say they have affidavits signed by people who were asked during a polygraph test if they had ever slept with someone of the same sex.

A common argument against the present boycott is that Joe Coors no longer runs the business, which is now said to be under the management of Jeff and Peter Coors. "That's bullshit," says Wallace. "He [Peter] gives to the same organizations Joe does. He's just better than Joe in terms of public image. The family still controls the company. None of the public stock is voting stock."

Tenure

Continued from page 3

that I'm not alone in valuing the research, the community work, the lesbian perspective, and the multi-racial perspective I brought to the university," Shaw told *GCN*. "This makes me realize the value of the work."

Shaw and her teenage daughter now live in San Francisco, where Shaw coordinates programs for

women at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. She is particularly active in educating women prisoners about AIDS. Tax-deductible contributions toward her legal costs can be made out to the Capp Street Foundation and sent to the Nancy Shaw Legal Defense Fund, P.O. Box 8255, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.

— filed from Boston

Flat-picking

Continued from page 6

Vogl through the tedium of the mindless factory work she was doing as she wrote it.

Susann Shanbaum sat in on much of the second set, giving Vogl the perfect opportunity to showcase her album's instrumentals. Shanbaum's contributions were so vital to these pieces, it is hard to imagine Vogl attempting them alone. The two women began playing music together 12 years ago and their friendship and their familiarity with each other's styles added depth to the songs. They play very well together, with Vogl providing the melodic and chordal framework and Shanbaum riffing over it.

Of the many instrumentals they played, "Hagology" in particular stood out with a wonderful use of harmonics incorporated into Shanbaum's playing. The two women displayed a shared, almost intuitive use of dynamics, especially on this piece.

At one point Vogl turned the stage over to Shanbaum for a solo number. Shanbaum's rendition of her own tune, "Clairvoyage," was disappointing, lacking the fluidity and verve with which she usually performs it. She appeared flustered, perhaps due to some rogue popping and crackling sounds coming through the sound system.

Ignoring the recent apparent trend in women's music to under-

play its strong lesbian underpinnings, Vogl angrily talked about the hypocrisy of movie-goers who can placidly watch a woman get tied up and butchered on screen, but who scream and cover their eyes at the slightest hint of same-sex affection. She went on to tell the mixed audience that, while she didn't want to alienate anyone, she did want them to know that she was devoting part of her life to writing as many lesbian love songs as possible.

This convergence of personal and political are what make Vogl's "issue" songs work so well. After one clears away all the rhetoric and theorizing, politics ultimately concern people, and Vogl never loses sight of this. Eschewing the abstract and intangible slogan, she writes songs about believable people, breaking the political down into a graspable, digestible form. She also avoids the simplistic single-theme protest for a more holistic, multi-issue approach.

The key to Vogl's music, regardless of the topic, is its accessibility. She knows herself, she knows human nature, and she sings of both with an unnerving openness. It is a refreshing experience to hear a performer who can skillfully examine, celebrate, and laugh at herself and others — and who can flat-pick up a storm, besides.

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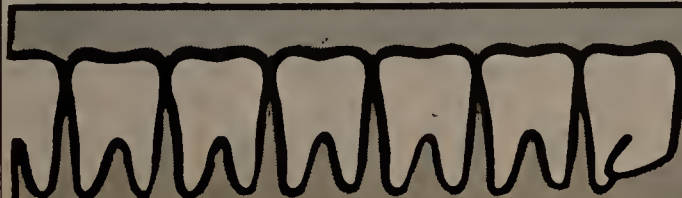
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Anonymous Phone Calls

Continued from page 1

unified and activated the community. Women like Mary and Susan, who have needed to deny their lesbianism in order to retain financial support and avoid physical abuse, fear additional calls. "Pamela," an out lesbian whose parents have not been telephoned, explained that she fatalistically waits, knowing her "deeply religious conservative Southern Baptist" parents would react strongly; they have already considered withdrawing her from Wheaton simply because she is developing feminist politics. Peg explained that some of her lesbian friends "live with a day-to-day fear of triggering calls," because they are not ready to come out to their parents. Mary admits to trusting no one "except those who have already been burned."

Simultaneously, the lesbian community at Wheaton is solidifying. According to Susan, the campus lesbian group, the Lesbian Alliance, has grown in membership from 6 to 8 students last year to between 17 and 40 this fall. Students are working with faculty and administrators on including sexual orientation in a sexual-harassment policy the school is drafting, and have sponsored mandatory dorm programs featuring members of Boston's Gay and Lesbian Speakers Bureau.

While lesbians fear consequences, they are choosing to remain a part of the Lesbian Alliance, to be out, and in some cases to confront other students about homophobia. Before the phone calls and recent escalation of campus harassment, Pamela explained, "we always felt if we didn't make waves, no one would bother us." Susan stated, "People have become upset enough that they won't take it." She believes it was not the telephone calls but rather recent additional harassment that stimulated the organized and individual responses. Susan expected to return to school and escape parental abuse related to the calls. Instead she and other lesbians discovered large L's on their doors a number of times and learned of persistent rumors about their sexuality. "It triggered something in me," Susan explained, "and I thought 'How long are you going to take this?'" Independently, Pamela and Susan began to confront women they heard making

blatantly homophobic comments and started speaking to other lesbians about the phone calls, learning they were not isolated instances.

In order to emphasize organizing versus encouraging fear, students are not making a unified effort to find the caller(s). They have discussed among themselves the possible identity of the harasser. Some believe she must be an administrator, given the span of eight years the calls cover. Others believe administrators are supportive of lesbians at Wheaton and in any case do not have access to the intimate details given in the calls. They believe the caller is a student living in a dorm or even working within the lesbian community. Because of the confession in the call to Susan's parents, one student suggested that the caller is a lesbian who herself faced parental abuse upon coming out, and wishes to inflict the same upon others. Most students do not believe a lesbian would make the phone calls.

As a whole, the lesbians interviewed concluded that they are unlikely to obtain conclusive evidence. They believe that education of all students is necessary and, most importantly, that group speculation would only turn an already fearful and mistrusting environment into a "witchhunt."

Administration and Faculty Role

The lesbians interviewed expressed strong appreciation for the role of the Wheaton faculty and administration in addressing the harassment. Professors have sought student input in including information on lesbians and gay men and homophobia in their courses. The faculty published a unanimous statement announcing that it "deplores acts of discrimination or hostility against members of the Wheaton community on the basis of their sexual orientation." The student government issued a similar statement, asserting lesbian and straight students "are equal in this community."

Students noted administration encouragement and funding of the Gay and Lesbian Speakers Bureau programs. According to Niki Janus, dean of the college, the administration is also seeking films and speakers to bring to campus and is working to strengthen counseling resources for lesbian

students.

Janus also told GCN she is willing to intervene and mediate in affected families. GCN asked Janus whether she would clarify for parents that lesbianism is not a disease from which to be "saved" and is acceptable within the Wheaton community. Janus stated that she would only "stress communication within the family."

Many students applaud Janus as informed about and supportive of their organizing. Janus asked GCN "to keep harassment at Wheaton in context," claiming that it is no different from other schools and stating that it ranges only from "students giving each other the cold shoulder to requesting a room change." When GCN reminded Janus about the telephone harassment and its consequences for students, she responded, "I don't know a lot about the phone calls.... There have been occasional phone calls by someone who is obviously uneducated and cowardly."

Janus stated that she is seeking an advisor for the Lesbian Alliance and is open to student input on whether that advisor should be a lesbian or gay man instead of a straight faculty member or administrator. She went on to acknowledge, however, that Wheaton does not include sexual orientation in its hiring and admissions non-discrimination clause, and that there are no out lesbians or gay men on the staff.

Additional Support

In addition to supportive faculty and administrators, some straight students are working with the Lesbian Alliance. Sarah Dickinson, a sophomore who has been lesbian-baited, recently published and distributed throughout her dorm a statement entitled "Let me give this to you straight." Dickinson denounced the verbal harassment she has received for associating with lesbians.

The Lesbian Alliance plans to sponsor events throughout the school year and hopes to publish an informational pamphlet on AIDS. The group seeks advice both on educating the campus community and on dealing with the parents involved. They can be reached at: The Lesbian Alliance, c/o Wheaton College, Norton, MA 02766.

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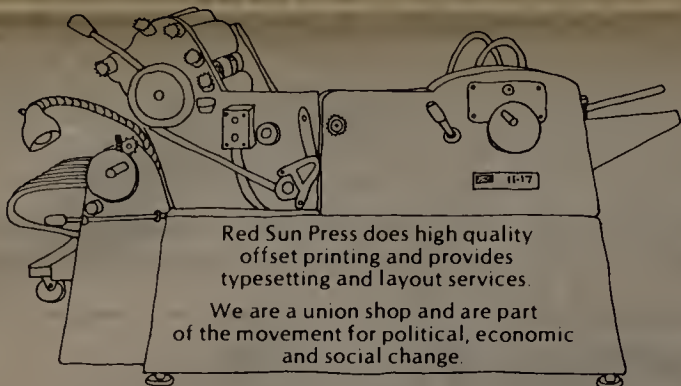
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"SAFE SEX"

Though it is not yet firmly established, medical people believe AIDS is transmitted through exchange of 'bodily fluids'(cum, blood, shit); that is, where one person's cum, for example, ENTERS another person. (In Boston the AIDS Action Committee has a slogan: "Cum on me, not in me!") So things you CAN definitely do are: mutual jackoff, body massage, hugging, surface (dry) kissing, body-to-body rubbing, light S&M activities (without bruising or bleeding), using your own sex toys.

Things you CAN probably do safely are: mouth to mouth (wet) kissing, sucking but stopping before cumming; ass fucking with condom; water sports (as long as no piss enters the body (through broken skin etc.).

The following are considered unsafe at the moment: fucking and getting fucked without condom; cocksucking and taking the load; rimming; fisting.

Prisoners Seeking Friends

Isolated/segregated, long brown haired, and full bearded Texas convict seeking to find admirable, open-minded, intelligent gays. TV/TSs who desire to establish a penpal affair. I'm 32 and a Taurus and can write other prisoners. Chester Vinton HAAS III, 327322A, Ellis 2, Huntsville TX 77340. (Note: Chester is being moved about (harassed) these days because of his law suits against the prison system, so if his mail comes back, try again in a few weeks or write GCN for the latest address.)

Would you see if any prisoners or lawyers out there know if the new federal sentencing guidelines are going to become retroactive. Richard B. LINDHORST, 290508-BB309 MSC, Box 520, Walla Walla WA 99362

Even though I am in prison, I am honest and sincere and would like to get to know a different sort of person than I am accustomed to knowing when I was free. I'm gay and proud of it and would very much like a "conversation" with another gay. Thanks. Tom GOODSON, 058384, Box 158-G-720, Lowell 32663

Gay man would like to write anyone from anywhere for friendship. Will be living eventually around Boston. I have a good personality, sense of humor and like cooking, music, going to clubs and movies. Will answer all letters received. Promised! Joseph BRYGODZINSKI, SECC No.C47638, 10 Administration Rd, Bridgewater MA 02324.

The Adm. here has finally approved my purchase of a small personal computer. Any GCN readers have info or offers of used machines, please let me know. [GCN Prisoner Proj. Note: Ed is definitely OK; 'heavy duty political gay prisoner' (!)] Ed MEAD, 251397, Box 777, Monroe, WA 98272.

Texas inmate seeking to make and write new friends. Presently find myself bored and lonely as I'm beginning to lose all my friends on the outside. I am a woman trapped inside a man's body, known to my friends as 'Cindy Lee'. I love the outdoors, cooking and sewing. Big strong men excite me. Edward BARBOA, 404943 Darrington, Rt 3 Box 59, Rosharon TX 77583

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TO ALL THOSE WHO IN AND OUT OF PRISON FIGHT AGAINST THEIR BONDAGE Alexander Berkman, Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist.



Taurus, butch-borderline dyke, medical technologist, doing 15 yrs for robbery, would like to write to serious-minded cancer or scorio fem. My interests are bodybuilding, tennis, karate, calligraphy, medicine and more. I love kids, loyal women (if there are any left), and quiet evenings at home. Vicki SIMMONS, 322889, Rt 4 Box 800, Gatesville TX 76528.

I'm a 25 yr old bisexual woman. I'm very outgoing and open minded. I enjoy living the fast life filled with new and exciting things. If you'd like us to get to know each other, write Roxanne GENTILE, Box 99, Framingham MA 01701

TEXAS JAILHOUSE LAWYERS PROJECT forming. For info write the Committee for Prison Reform, Box 52717, Houston TX 77052.



CALENDAR

December 14 to January 5

14 saturday

Cambridge — "The Ideal Relationship," lesbian singles discussion. Daughters of Bilitis, 1151 Mass. Ave., Old Cambridge Baptist Church. 8PM. \$1. Info: 661-3633.

Boston — Jewish Women's Discussion Group and Am Tikva Hanukkah. Church of the Covenant, Newbury & Berkeley Sts. 8PM. \$5. Bring menorahs and candles. For Jewish lesbians and their women friends.

Cambridge — Red Hearts monthly potluck dinner for leftward-leaning gay men. 7-9PM. Info: Clay, 547-5166.

Boston — Boston Gay Men's Chorus: "Strike the Harp & Join the Chorus." Jordan Hall, N.E. Conservatory. 8PM. Sign interpreted. \$6-10. Info: 536-2412.

Boston — "Persephone and Hades," an interactive performance at Mobius. 354 Congress St. 8PM. \$5. Info: 542-7416.

Boston — Triangle Theater presents *Bloodlips*, "Living Leg-Ends." Paramount Penthouse, 58-62 Berkeley St. 8PM. \$12-20. Info: 353-0434.

Cambridge — "For Colored Girls...." Leverett House Old Library, Harvard Sq. Plays through 12/14. Info: 498-2073 or 498-3152.

Cambridge — Ann Magnuson, performance: *Occupational Hazards*, the minimum wages of sin." Brattle Theater. 7:30PM. \$10, \$8, students & seniors.

Boston — "Nairobi Voices," videotapes from the U.N. Women's Conference. Somewhere Else, 295 Franklin St. 3PM. Info: 623-5283.

16 monday

Somerville — Support group for battered lesbians. Open only to lesbians who have been or are being abused. Weekly, free. Child-care available. Info: Respond, Inc., 623-5900.

18 wednesday

Boston — Videotape of lecture by Kate Cannon, as part of "Naming, Claiming, Changing: *Sojourns with Black Women*" series. BNN-TV, Cable Channel A3. 8PM.

19 thursday

Boston — GCN's production night: all welcome to proofread & paste-up pages. 5-7PM for proofreading, 8PM-midnight for paste-up. 167 Tremont St., near Park & Boylston T-stops. GCN: 426-4469.

Dorchester — GALA monthly meeting. Codman Square Library, 690 Washington St. 7PM. Info: 288-9155 or 288-4367.

Cambridge — Monthly drop-in discussion group for women with incest histories. Topic: "power." Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7:30-9:30PM. Info: 492-1818.

20 friday

Boston — GCN's volunteer night: all welcome to help mail the paper to our subscribers. Refreshments, good times. Anytime after 6PM. 167 Tremont St., near Park & Boylston T-stops. GCN: 426-4469.

Boston — Girls' Night Out holiday party. Somewhere Else, Franklin St. 8PM. \$8.



Boston Gay Men's Chorus, Dec. 14

Boston — Daughters of Bilitis Holiday Party/Potluck. 156 Warren Ave. 7:30PM. All women welcome. Info: 661-3633.

24 tuesday

Cambridge — LEGACY drop-in social for older lesbians, gay men, and their friends. Cambridge Committee of Elders, 15 Pearl St., Central Sq. 6-8PM. Info: 725-4907.

Boston — Am Tikva Men's Potluck Party. Hill House, 74 Joy St. 7:30PM. RSVP: 782-8894.

25 wednesday

Boston — Am Tikva Women's Potluck Party. Hill House, 74 Joy St. 7:30 PM. RSVP by Dec. 18: 625-4298.

27 friday

Conway, NH — White Mountain Nordic Ski Weekend with the Chiltern Mtn. Club. Expertise unnecessary. Info: Bob, 282-9192 or Alan, 658-4652.

28 saturday

Bangor, ME — Bangor Interweave Dance. Unitarian Church. 9PM-1AM. Info: (207) 884-7683 or P.O.B. 8008, Bangor, ME 04401.

29 sunday

Bethel, ME — Ski touring with Chiltern Mtn. Club. Meet at Sunday River Ski-Touring Center. Info: Michael, 522-9194.

Cambridge — Cambridge GALA Potluck. 6PM. Old & new members welcome. Info: Kathryn, 661-6896 or David, 497-6197.

31 tuesday

Cambridge — LEGACY drop-in social for older lesbians, gay men, and their friends. Cambridge Committee of Elders, 15 Pearl St., Central Sq. 6-8PM. Info: 725-4907.

Cambridge — Amethyst Women's Annual Letting Go New Year's Dance. YWCA, 7 Temple St. 9PM-1AM. \$5. Free childcare. Drug- & alcohol-free event.

3 friday

Boston — Am Tikva discussion group and Oneg Shabbat. Hill House, 74 Joy St., Beacon Hill. Info: 782-8894.

5 sunday

Dorchester — GALA Holiday Potluck. 4PM. Bring a dish or beverage to share. Info: 288-9155.

note this!

Fen, by Caryl Churchill. With Tricia Ialeggio, Jan Connery, Sara Chazen, Kevin Kerage, Tara Dolan, and Maja Hellmond. At the Alley Theater, Cambridge, through Dec. 21.

No, *Fen* is not about the Boston neighborhood that houses so many "Guppies." The Fens is a marshy area in eastern England, drained in the 1700s to become fertile crop land, and the agricultural laborers of this play are indeed bogged down in their dank, constricted lives.

Although *Fen* is listed as having been published in 1983, after Caryl Churchill's successful *Top Girls*, *Cloud Nine*, and *Vinegar Tom*, it has the feel of an earlier work. As a play it is, despite a very cramped set, probably equal to anything you will see in Boston this year; as a Churchill play, it's a slight disappointment. Her innovative structuring of time is absent, and the trademark multiple roles do not have the usual strong resonances between same-actor characters. Churchill takes aim at some of her favorite targets here — capitalism, class, religion, conformity, but not, Churchill fans will be sad to hear, gender or sexuality this time. These themes, which she has explored more incisively in her other work, seem merely alluded to here. *Fen* is surprisingly linear, but lacks a strongly coherent vision.

The central thread in the flickering-quick scenes is the less-than-compelling tale of Val and Frank: she shocks the village by leaving her husband and two children for love of Frank, then returns to the husband for the love of the kids. When she rejoins Frank, the two sink into a suffocating and eventually fatal despair.

Despair and its consequences are central to *Fen*. A Japanese corporation owns the land the laborers have lived on and worked for generations, and they live mind- and heart-numbingly close to the poverty line. None of these people has ever had what they really wanted, and if they get a glimmer of it, they back off suspiciously, failures of imagination helping to imprison them further. We are on familiar Churchill ground as the characters pass their frustrations on to each other: lonely Angela tortures her adolescent stepdaughter Becky, who then leads a group in taunting the nonconforming Nell; likeable, dykey Nell turns her anger, refreshingly but impotently, against the bosses. In a chilling cameo, the elderly Margaret relays her grandfather's tale: when times were bad, "they'd go out and stab the animals. They felt quieter then."

The transcendent, nearly millennialist ending is a statement of faith in human capability. A relief after the gloom of the play, it also seems something of a non sequitur. That this freedom comes in a kind of dream implies the importance of the imagination as liberating, but it also remains, for each person, an individual transcendence.

Tricia Ialeggio, Jan Connery, Sara Chazen, and Kevin Kerage give excellent performances, and Tara Dolan and Maja Hellmond work hard for good but less even ones. Having seen some of these same actors in the Alley's superb production of Churchill's *Top Girls*, I can't help suspecting a certain amount of typecasting. With her hair skinned back to emphasize a severe profile, Ialeggio (Pope Joan/Louise in *Top Girls*) is again, as Angela/Mrs. Finch, a rigid character; Chazen, with her mobile, expressive features (*Top Girls*'s Dull Gret/Angle) is again a tormented adolescent, giving off, as Becky, the same fine glints of childish, murderish intensity. Either of these two could have brought more depth to the role of Val than Dolan.

— Mara Math



Fen: see review in notes column.

15 sunday

Cambridge — Jay Goldspinner: "Stories for Everyday Use." Rising Phoenix Gallery, 244 Columbia St. (off Hampshire St.) 3PM. \$5. Info: 492-7522 or 1-799-4671.

Brookline — Brookline/Brighton/Allston lesbians potluck dinner. 6PM. Info: 566-1873.

Watertown — Gays & Lesbians of Watertown monthly meeting. 7PM. Info: 926-5371 or write, GLOW, PO Box 373, Newtowne Branch, Boston, MA 02258.

Jamaica Plain — Lesbian & Gay Neighbors of J.P. holiday potluck. First Church Hall, Eliot & Centre Sts. 3:30-7PM. Info: 522-6090 or 522-3894.

Cambridge — Lesbian reading group discusses *The Ladies* by Doris Grumbach. Daughters of Bilitis, 1151 Mass. Ave., Old Cambridge Baptist Church. 8PM. \$1. Info: 661-3633.


Boston — Am Tikva Shabbat Service and Oneg. Hill House, 74 Joy St. Info: 782-8894.

21 saturday

Cambridge — Amethyst Women's Winter Solstice Celebration and Dance. Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. 9PM-Midnight. \$4. Free quality childcare. Drug- & alcohol-free event.

Calendar compiled by Miranda Kolbe

GAY COMMUNITY NEWS



A GreyStone's Christmas

Happy Holidays from Santa and the Staff.
We hope that you'll join us as we
celebrate the season with our

Christmas Party...

- Complimentary
Holiday Buffet
- Dancing
- Gifts
- Holiday Surprises

**Friday, Dec. 20,
9 pm-...**

8 Kingston St., Boston

574-9429

Christmas is the time to share with the people you care about. We hope you'll share this night with us.